

**REPORT/RECOMMENDATION TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
OF SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY, CALIFORNIA
AND RECORD OF ACTION**

16

February 3, 2004

FROM: **KEN A. MILLER, Director**
Department of Public Works - Regional Parks Division

SUBJECT: **USE AGREEMENT FOR CAMP BLUFF LAKE**

RECOMMENDATION: Approve Use Agreement with The Wildlands Conservancy for the County's use of the Camp Bluff Lake facility, located near the City of Big Bear, from April 1, 2004 through September 30, 2004 for a children's summer camping program.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION: In 2000, The Wildlands Conservancy (The Conservancy) purchased Camp Bluff Lake from the Orange County YMCA and has subsequently operated the camp. Camp Bluff Lake is located in the San Bernardino Mountains close to the City of Big Bear. Surrounded by the National Forest, the 120-acre camp sits 7,600 feet above the valley floor. The camp facility has been completely renovated by The Conservancy including a new, state-of-the-art dining facility which is expected to be completed by late fall 2004. In September of 2002, the Regional Parks Division was approached by The Conservancy with an offer to take over the operations of the facility. Since that time, Regional Parks has analyzed the proposal and determined that the operation can be financially self-sustaining and an integral part of the Regional Park System. Presently there is no youth camp facility in the County of San Bernardino that is owned by the County and operated with a specific focus on the disadvantaged youth of this County.

To become familiar with the facility and its operational requirements, the Board of Supervisors (on May 20, 2003) approved the concept of Regional Parks operating Camp Bluff Lake on a trial basis for the 2003 summer season. The Board also directed staff to negotiate an agreement with The Conservancy for use of the camp for summer of 2003. Regional Parks did not operate the camp during the summer of 2003 due to the short time for preparing a program (including arranging for staff) and coordination of a temporary dining and kitchen facility. Since Regional Parks did not get the opportunity last summer to operate Camp Bluff Lake, the Department proposes this recommended agreement that will allow the County to use this facility for the upcoming summer.

In accordance with the Use Agreement with The Conservancy, the County will be permitted use of Camp Bluff Lake premises, at no charge, from April 1, 2004 through September 30, 2004 for the operation of a children's summer camping program. The only requirement that The Conservancy has placed on Regional Parks is that a significant number of camp attendees be children from San Bernardino County socio-economically disadvantaged families and that these children not be charged to attend the facility. However, Regional Parks will require that all attendees make reservations through County programs and/or organizations providing youth programs. The organizations will cover the costs associated with attendance at camp for qualified participants.

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Approval of this recommendation will allow the County use of Camp Bluff Lake for this summer's camping program. For this program, Regional Parks will hire approximately thirteen staff consisting of ten (10) extra-help Public Service Employees, one (1) Contract Camp Administrator, one (1) Contract Camp Ranger, and one (1) Contract Health Care Supervisor (Note: Employment agreements for the three (3) contract employees will be presented separately to the Board for its consideration and approval). Additional costs to operate the facility will include food, utilities, and maintenance. All of these costs will be fully offset by camp revenues. Staff from Regional Parks and the Children's Services Department is in the process of finalizing a Memorandum of Understanding between the two Departments that will result in 330 children visiting Camp Bluff Lake this summer.

Pursuant to the Board's direction, the Regional Parks Division will prepare a report by November 15, 2004 that will summarize the results of the 2004 summer season, project the annual operating costs and revenues of this facility, estimate staffing requirements, and include recommendations for the future operation of the camp. If a decision is made to operate the camp full time, a longer term will be negotiated with The Wildlands Conservancy will that include an option to the County of San Bernardino for assuming ownership of the campground and improvements.

REVIEW AND APPROVAL BY OTHERS: This item has been approved as to legal form by County Counsel (Deputy County Counsel, Fiona Luke 387-5474) on December 16, 2004 and reviewed by the County Administrative Office (Tom Forster, Administrative Analyst 387-4635), on January 16, 2004.

FINANCIAL IMPACT: Approval of this item will result in no net financial impact to the County. This is because Regional Parks will control expenditure levels for this limited Camp Bluff Lake operation to ensure that costs do not exceed program revenues. Currently, Regional Parks has received \$82,500 from the Children's Services Department for 330 camperships at Camp Bluff Lake. All revenues and expenditures related to Camp Bluff Lake will be accounted for in a separate Enterprise Fund (EME OCP CCP). This fund has sufficient appropriations available in the FY 2003/2004 budget for any costs incurring in the current fiscal year. This Fund will include appropriations in FY 2004/2005 for anticipated costs subsequent to June 30, 2004.

COST REVIEW SECTION: The County Administrative Office has reviewed this agenda item and concurs with the Department's proposal because operating Camp Bluff Lake on a limited basis is expected to be financially self-supporting. Also, this item will benefit a significant number of children from San Bernardino County socio-economically disadvantaged families by allowing them to attend the camp at no charge.

SUPERVISORIAL DISTRICT(S): Third

PRESENTER: Thomas A. Potter, Chief of Regional Parks, 387-2340